

**TODD MERRELL  
JAMES SELLARS**

*Miscellaneous Songs*

**JNNY**

for Voice, String Quartet, and Keyboard

HOG RIVER MUSIC  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

## PROGRAM NOTES

The ten *Miscellaneous Songs* are for unspecified voice (optionally amplified), keyboard (preferably electronic) and string quartet. They are decidedly postmodern in style, tending to deal with the present in terms of the past and the past in terms of the present. The musical idiom ranges from a crunchy chromaticism to a lilting diatonic sweetness. Despite a degree of unity in this stylistic disunity, the songs do not constitute a cycle or even a set: one to all ten may be sung in any order as the singer(s) choose.

The texts to the *Miscellaneous Songs* deal with various contemporary ideas, from our increasingly administrated robotic lives in *Function* and the constant interruptions brought on by technology in *Discontinuous*, to a pleasant dream of escape in *Dolce Far Niente*.

*Sound in My Head* and *I've Decided* are, in their self-absorption, songs to oneself. *Is This a Love Song*, if not exactly self-absorption, is a self-dialog, less about the impossibility of love than about the impossibility of yet another love song. *To Write a Song* carries our millennial skepticism a step further and questions the writing of any song — except, of course, one on the subject of writing a song. *I've Never Talked to a Tree* is a doubly-coded song, sincere and satirical at the same time.

*I Have Nothing to Say*, a modular song, is based on John Cage's famous statement, permuted into a poem by the Scottish poet Edwin Morgan. *JNNY* is a setting of a pop tune and lyric by composer Todd Merrell (with a word and note changed here and there).

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This is my fourth setting of a tune and lyric by composer Todd Merrell (with a word and note changed here and there). The flexible vocal line is set over an unyielding rhythmic grid of complicated harmonies and involved instrumentation. I hear in it touches of Ravel, Shostakovich, and the Beatles. *JNNY* (under the influence of “computer chic” she omits the *e* from her name) is a character whom Todd and I continue to develop. At present for *JNNY* (sometimes *JnnY*), modernism is over. She is no longer self-absorbed (as in the song) and has just bought for herself a computer program for baking bread. In the end she goes into cybernetics and becomes Star of the Internet.

## PERFORMANCE NOTES

- Voice part may be amplified
- Keyboard part may be performed on an acoustic piano, electric piano, or synthesizer. The various synthesizer patches are described below.
- Patches (and patch changes) are indicated in the Keyboard part by a number in a box **1**  
*JNNY* uses only one patch:

1: Synth flute with bell-like envelope and slight chuff.

- A reference cassette (or DAT) of synthesizer sounds (as part of a sequencer “performance”) is available from the publisher. This recording may be used by the singer in preparing for performance.
- Parts are available from the publisher:

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# JNNY

Todd Merrell  
James Sellars

♩=104

Voice

Her name was Jn-ny Ge-nó - a or sa - la - mi somd'ing

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

Keyboard

5

she was so beau-ti - ful pret - ty nice I'll ne-ver for-getwhenshe en-tered my life. It was

8va

loco

2

9

(spoken)

in- a Nathan's— or may-be outside the information booth at Penn Station She wore her hair and her

arco

13

shi - ny clothes— so new wave - ly— and they were both made of plas-tic and they shim-mered— all—

17

back - lit\_ and fake Ja\_ - pan\_ fin-ish-ed\_ I have a dim re-col-lec - tion of her face\_ it was\_

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mf*

21

just sort of there\_ And I'll ne-ver for-get whenshe said\_ that squeak\_ is so an-

21

*mf*

(spoken)

noy-ing — It was just a sound in the song, — ne-ver mind We will ne - ver part I love you We'll be to - ge-ther for - e - ver

*p* *pp* *cresc. poco a poco*

*p* *pp* *cresc. poco a poco*

*p* *pp* *cresc. poco a poco*

*pp* *cresc. poco a poco*

*p* *pp* *cresc. poco a poco*

and e - ver She want-ed to dance in a club — she used to sell ci - ga - rets — her earrings

*f* *f* *f* *fp*

*f* *f* *fp*

*f* *f* *fp*

*f* *f* *fp*

33 *(spoken)*  
were so dang - ly Walk - ing in the dorm — up and down — and up and — she wait - ed —

*mf* *p* *mp*  
*mf* *pizz* *p*  
*mf* *pizz* *p*  
*mf* *pizz* *p*

37  
— Not for a - ny - thing — real - ly Just — some - thing — (a - ny - thing

*cantabile*

*p*

will do) Lone - ly and in - con - se - quen - tial I'll have you

*pp*

know I'm in col - lege How can a - ny - one be col - le - giate and still be lost And then I

*arco*

*poco*

*arco*

8<sup>va</sup>.....



48 *3* *3* *3*  
 saw her click-ing a-way — at a cash re-gis-ter — I have a dim re-col-lec-tion of her

48 (8va) *f*

52  
 face it was just — sort of there — I'll ne-ver for-get when she said Oh that squeak —

52 *p*

— is so an - noy - ing, ooh — Ba - by — We — will — ne - ver part I love you we'll be to -

(8va) *f* *mf* *f* *mp* *f* *mf*

56 *f* *f* *mf*

— ge - ther — for - e - ver — and e - ver She wanted to dance in a club, she used to sell ci - ga - rets Her earrings

8va *ff* *ff*

60 *ff*

64

were so gosh— darn dang - ly and large

*p* (nail pizz) *ff subito*

*p* *ff subito*

*p* *ff subito*

*p* *ff subito*

*p* *ff*

68

68

*rit.*

meno mosso (♩=92)

Do you be-lieve in love

Musical score for measures 72-75. The vocal line begins with the lyrics "Do you be-lieve in love". The piano accompaniment consists of arpeggiated chords in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand. Dynamics include *p* and *rit.*

meno mosso (♩=92)

Do you be - lieve in a hea-ven a-bove—

Musical score for measures 76-79. The vocal line continues with the lyrics "Do you be - lieve in a hea-ven a-bove—". The piano accompaniment features a flowing arpeggiated accompaniment in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Dynamics include *dolce*, *espr.*, and *legato*.

What are you dream-ing of \_\_\_\_\_ Is it a Vi - sa Gold or may-be your ve - ry owwmall

*rall.*

*senza vib.*

*mf*  $\rightrightarrows$  *mp*

*senza vib.*

*mf*  $\rightrightarrows$  *mp*

*senza vib.*

*mf*  $\rightrightarrows$  *mp*

*senza vib.*

*mf*  $\rightrightarrows$  *mp*

80 tempo I (♩=ca.104)

*rall.*

*p legato*

*red.*

84

Her name was Jn - ny Ge - nó - a or sa - la - mi some-thing She was so beau - ti - ful pret-

*p ma articolato*

*mp*

*pizz*

*p*

*pizz*

*p*

*pizz*

*p*

*p*

*pizz*

84

12

88

— ty nice I'll ne-ver for-get when she en-tered my life— It was in\_ a Na-than's\_ or may-be

arco

arco 0

arco

88

92

*(spoken freely)*

I can't remember She wore her hair and her shi - ny clothes— so new wave-

92

96

ly \_\_\_\_\_ and they were both made of plas-tic and they shim-mered \_\_\_\_\_ all back-lit and fake Ja -

*tr.*  
*p*  
*sul pont.*  
*p*

96

100

pan- fin-ished \_\_\_\_\_ I have a dim re-col-lec - tion of herface \_\_\_\_\_ it was \_\_\_\_\_ just sort of there \_\_\_\_\_

*pos. ord.*  
*p dolce*  
*p dolce*  
*pos. ord.*  
*p dolce*  
*p dolce*

100

*p dolce*

And I'll ne-ver for-get whenshe said— that squeak is so an - noy-ing— It was just a

sound in the song,— ne-ver mind We will ne - ver part I love you We'll be to - get - her for - e - ver



111  
 and e - ver She want-ed to dance in a club— she used to sell ci-ga-rets— her ear-rings

*f* *espr.* *f* *f* *f* *f*

111

*f* *f* *f* *f*

115  
 were so gosh— darn dang - ly and large and beau-ti - ful

*dim poco a poco* *pp* *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *p*

115

*dim poco a poco* *pp* *p*